

## BAINBRIDGE ISLAND REVIEW

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### Fed funds favored for memorial

By **TRISTAN BAURICK** Staff Writer

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*The prospect of federal help in the internment memorial draws strong support.*

If getting hitched to the feds means hundreds of thousands of dollars for the island's Japanese American internment memorial, many Bainbridge residents are ready to pop the question.

The funding and support options are clear-cut, said National Park Service cultural specialist Alisa Lynch, during a meeting Tuesday to discuss three proposals for the memorial.

"These are choices in levels of stability and commitment," she said. "Do you want dating, engagement or marriage?"

Clarence Moriwaki of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community was already on bended knee.

"It's really a no-brainer," he said, adding his strong support for "Option C," which would allot up to \$400,000 of federal funds for facility construction and about \$200,000 for annual operational costs, including a paid, permanent NPS staffer and several seasonal employees.

Most of the 25 residents who attended the meeting also supported the highest-paying, highest-staffed option and the memorial's inclusion in the national park system.

Bill Beck, a U.S. Navy retiree, said it was the federal government that signed the order to incarcerate the island's Japanese Americans – so it's only right that Washington, D.C. provide substantial support for the memorial.

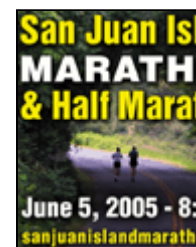
"The federal government made Executive Order 9066 a law, so I want to see the feds involved," he said.

The memorial would be built on eight acres on the south side of Eagle Harbor, east of Taylor Avenue. Almost 230 Japanese American island residents departed from a ferry landing at the site in 1942; they were sent to the Manzanar wartime internment camp in Owens Valley, Calif., and then Minidoka in southern Idaho. Both camps have been designated as historically significant sites and are managed by the NPS.

The Bainbridge site did not qualify for "monument" status partly because the ferry landing no longer exists.

The NPS now favors including the Bainbridge site to provide "a larger historical context."

Option C would establish the memorial as a satellite unit of the Minidoka Internment National Monument, linking it to a national effort



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to cover the broader scope of Japanese Americans' imprisonment during World War II.

The least-supported of the three presented options included a plan without federal money and very limited NPS technical support. Longtime island resident Lilly Kodama, who was interned at the age of 7, favored strong NPS support but hoped the site would also celebrate the island's warm response when she and her family returned in the late 1940s.

"It's easy to be critical and make stereotypical assumptions, but Bainbridge was great in that it welcomed most of us back," Kodama said. "That's unique and I hope the monument will tell that story too."

While agreeing he didn't want to see a "guilt monument" on Eagle Harbor, Ed Kushner said inclusion in the federal system and a strong national connection could "add a bigger dimension" to a local issue.

"Otherwise, it's a blip on a map," he added.

Some attendees expressed concerns about increased auto traffic after NPS staff said the relatively remote Manzanar monument attracts 80,000 visitors a year.

"Do we need to be planning for that?" asked Councilwoman Christine Rolfes, who stressed the need for attendance estimates.

The NPS met some resistance in Idaho during formation of the Minidoka monument, "from farmers who are a little 'out there' and don't want the government in their backyard," said NPS anthropologist Frederick York. But Bainbridge, he said, has already built a "tremendous array of grassroots support" for the memorial, which adds credibility to possible NPS involvement.

The NPS will accept comments through June 1 to [anna\\_tamura@nps.gov](mailto:anna_tamura@nps.gov), and then finalize and submit recommendations to Congress for consideration.

The first phase of memorial development – including parking areas, trails and a boardwalk – should begin in the next few months, regardless of federal support, Moriwaki said. The second phase, including the partial reconstruction of the ferry landing, are planned as more funds are raised.

The Bainbridge Island City Council is slated to consider a resolution in support of the memorial at Wednesday's council meeting.

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